

THE
Parent Disinherited
BY HIS
OFF-SPRING;
OR

An Enquiry into the Delicent of
PENAL EVIL,
With its Tendencies to subdue, and expel
MORAL EVIL.

ROM. vi. 12.

*Wherefore, as by one Man Sin entered into the
World, and Death by Sin, &c.*

JOB v. 17.

*Behold happy is the Man whom God correcteth,
therefore despise not, &c.*

L O N D O N:

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My Commission Expires

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at

Washington, D.C.

Witness my hand and seal

this

day of



The **DEDICATION**
of the following Essay is
in general,

To all the Sons, and Daughters of Affliction.

TO my dear, and very valuable Friend
in particular; whose bodily Consti-
tution has been long under the Pressure of
Disorder.

To the sanctifying Power of GOD, I af-
fectionately recommend you, in the Peru-
sal thereof; by which alone his Word or
his Rod, or any friendly Attempt, can
contribute to our Welfare.

To whom be ascribed Glory, as in the
Churches (through CHRIST JESUS) Amen.



THE DEDICATION
of the following Essay is
in general

To the Hon. and Right Hon. the

O my dear and my sincere friend
I have the honor to acknowledge
that you have been the patron of
this work.

To the Hon. the Baron of G. G. G.
I have the honor to acknowledge
that you have been the patron of
this work, and I have the honor
to acknowledge that you have
been the patron of this work.

To whom he is indebted, as in the
Christian through Christ Jesus Amen.





T H E
Parent Disinherited
 B Y H I S
 OFFSPRING.



IF the Frame and Construction of our World be attended unto with any Degree of Care; we shall readily observe, in its harmonious Structure, the evident Traces of Skill, Power, and Goodness, no less than Infinite!

To which Source it must necessarily owe its Original.

But carrying the Survey a little farther, methinks I discern something like Disorder, in that Part of it which lies nearest my View and Scrutiny.

There is in its Face, a cloudy and unpromising Aspect! The Earth a Scene of Alterations and Changes! and each of these, some Way or other, administering or contributing to the Pain and Unhappiness of some or other of its Parts and Members. So that this Part of the Survey will not suffer a like conclusive Inference with the former, *viz.* That these Things owe their Origination to the Efforts of Wisdom, Power and Goodness.

And

And yet I cannot suppose that this Disorder could take its Rise from any accidental, or fortuitous Attempt made upon its Constitution ; because those very Disorders seem under Restraint, and to pay a Regard to some governing Law, as appears by their natural Tendencies, being often converted to much more agreeable Ends and Uses, than might rationally have been expected.

Neither can I think that any Law of Fatality could introduce them ; because the same unguided resistless Force might as well have carried its malign Influence (long e'er this) to a greater Extent, so as to have entirely spoiled the whole Frame ; leaving no Order, Regularity, or Beauty in the whole Machine ! or else by a reverse Effort, have restored the Whole to its pristine Excellence and Glory ; having first purged away all its Disorders ! To suppose this, would be a harsh Imposition upon my rational Powers and Faculties ; and to suppose the former, viz. That that BEING who gave Original to all that is regular, symmetrical and harmonious, was the Patron of these Disorders, would be a direct Contradiction, and the highest Absurdity ; because that two different and contrary Effects cannot proceed from the same Cause.— This premised, it will perhaps be no useless Inquiry, should I attempt to settle a just Idea of the true Cause, and undoubted Parent of these Evils.

To do this with the greater Certainty, let us turn our Eye to Revelation, from whence I discern this Truth arising, attended with the strongest Evidence ; viz. That the Great Parent-Mind, who gave Existence and Figure to the whole Universe of Beings, according to his good Pleasure, constituted a World of different Orders, Ranks, and Forms of Beings, all designed, according to their different Natures and Capacities, to be the Objects

jects of his Love, and Goodness, and proportionably to reflect his Praise!

Some of these Creatures received from Him such Endowments of Nature, as to render them near a-kin to Deity, and which admitted that venerable Appellation, the Sons of God!

This Excellence of Nature seemed to lie in a Power of Thought; which Thought consisted in Reasoning, and Judging of Things, thereby understanding their different Natures, and several Relations; and as under the Direction of the eternal Law, a forming of their own Conduct consonant thereunto. These Kinds of Beings thus qualified, must soon understand that the Sovereign LORD of Nature must be the most Regular and Happy Mind; (and the more so, because Independent and Necessary;) and consequently, that so far as they could, and did understand that Will and Law (which was, and always is, the grand Directory and Motive to this Happy BEING) and so far as they could, and did conform to it; so far must they themselves share a Pleasure truly noble and divine! because as that original Happy and Holy MIND could not form a Creature, with Dispositions and Inclinations contrary to his own; so the Cultivation and Improvement of such as resemble his, must be attended with like happy Effects; in proportion to the Difference there is between the Capacities of the Creature, and its GOD!

This Power or Faculty of the Creature by which it was rendered capable of understanding the Will of its MAKER, and of voluntarily conforming, or nonconforming to it; stamps upon all its Actions the Nature and Name of Virtue, or Vice; and must produce, as a necessary Consequence, Pleasure or Pain; Happiness or Misery. This Angels found true in Fact, when they by their Disobe-

Disobedience left their high Station, and tumbled headlong to Hell !

Now nothing can be more rational and just than to imagine and expect, that when the Creature has perverted and corrupted his own Nature, (by violating its universal Law) that every Thing about him must make a very different address to his several Powers, and Faculties under the Force of such Propensions and Inclinations, which differ so much from, as to be the reverse of the settled Law of Nature and Things ! and no Wonder, that when the Father of Spirits saw himself thus affronted, and his Image abused, he should expel from his blissful Presence ; yea, suffer his Justice and Holiness to animadvert with Severity ; without so much as admitting a kind Thought towards them ! Oh, miserable Objects of such Wrath ! for it must be supposed that the grand Receptacle and Abode of such delinquent Spirits, must be a Mansion of intense Misery ! nay, where-ever such a Spirit resides, though it should be among the Blessed, there would be found an utter Unsuitableness in the Nature of Things, to such a disordered Mind, and such as is attended with painful Productions.

And thus I think 'tis indisputably plain, that the Foundation and Rise of all penal Evil, which the Creature is any Way exposed to, is laid in its own moral Depravity and Unlikeness to God, which Depravity appeared first in the Angels (according to Revelation).

But as those penal Evils which infest this lower System, and affect the human Race, seem not to be the immediate Effect of that first angelic Rebellion ; I would proceed to a more direct Inquiry.

And still keeping my Eye on this Revelation, I find it represents Man in his first Appearance begirt with native Beauty, and excellent Endowments

ments; in such sort, that, in the Scale of Beings, his Place is but little lower than the Angels; perfect according to his Nature, and upright before his God; designed (if his Innocency bore the State of Trial assigned him) for a removal of his Abode to a more glorious and refined Apartment; even to repeople the Wastes of Heaven, from whence *Lucifer* with his Legions were fallen.

In his Make, there seems to be something peculiar; as to his Body, it was gross in its original, formed of the Earth, which must indicate his Relation to it; which is farther confirmed by its several Organs, and Appetites being nicely adapted, and capacitated to participate the exuberant Bounties of Nature and Providence in such a Clime.

His Mind at the same time being constituted of nobler and more refined Powers and Faculties, with a Complexion, Relish and Taste vastly different; must indicate a superior Design in his Make, to the Gratification of Sense, and Matter, and must very much facilitate the Notion of a gradual Improvement in order to a more exalted Station in the Rational and Intellectual World.

This Idea of Human Probation, is cleared and confirmed by a further Inquiry; and the very Point of Trial exhibited by Man was to prove the Strength of his Virtue, and the Steadiness of his Fealty, which lay in a dutiful and strict Observance of a divine Caution, or Prohibition; a Conformity to which, was nothing more than a reasonable Observance of the Law of Nature, or the Order, and Regularity of this World; as will appear by considering,

1. That what was required or enjoyed in the Prohibition, made it requisite in order to a Compliance with it, that the Mind should always hold the Reins of Government over the brutal or bodily Appetites, and Sensation! Which Restriction was

neither large, nor severe ; every Fruit might be tasted, but the one prohibited !

2. A strong Diffusive or Caution is thrown in in order to over-balance and determine his Choice, in Case of Temptation : Which Caution is plainly pointed at, in the peculiar Name of the prohibited Tree, by which its Nature is explained, and represented, *viz.* as being the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.*

Had it been Good only, that was further to be known by the Experiment ; and that to Advantage ! it would every way have inanced the Difficulty of a due Observance of the Edict ; and would very much (at least to the View of a finite Creature) have justified the Tempter's Charge upon the Most High, *Gen.* iii. 5. But to know Evil also (I would suppose) must be shocking ! and even to *Adam* (in a cool Thought) carry Terror in it.

3. There is that Evil as to its Effects expressly specified, *In the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* So that it appears to be a very kind Prohibition (so far from being only arbitrary, positive and severe :) For 'tis presumptively evident (at least) that there was an innate Quality in that Fruit, which rendered it unsalutary, and poysonous to the Constitution of an human Body ; for this Fruit was no sooner tasted, but the Man became mortal, and in the Day he eat thereof (in this Sense) he died. And this Hypothesis is much strengthened by the Sequel of those Transactions between *Adam*, his Wife, and the Serpent (or Devil.) For 'tis observable, that lest *Adam* should use that Freedom, which his Bountiful LORD had before allowed him, *viz.* of tasting every Tree else (but this of Knowledge) even the Tree of Life (which perhaps was so called, as bearing a sort of Fruit antidotal to all Poisons, and might have expelled this :) To prevent his former Access this
sacred

sacred Tree is guarded by a Squadron of flaming Cherubs ! which Appearance of theirs to *Adam* is now altered : He before (in all Probability) having had free Converse with those very Beings, to whom their Address was benign, friendly, and kind ! These before came on high Embassies of Love and Peace, congratulating his Happiness and Joy ! and no doubt with Pleasure conferred with this most happy Pair, on the most sublime and lofty Subjects ; but their Mien and Deport, which e'er now was peaceful and lovely, is now so much altered, that their very Garb is Flame, and pointed Wrath on every Side attacks the Sinner's Approach ! And thus is Man disinherited and driven from this delightful Eminence, under all the Disadvantages of a naked, and exposed Constitution ! Methinks, *Adam's* finding himself naked, immediately upon the Operation of this Fruit, seems to intimate, that before this dire Experiment, the *Cuticula* (or Covering) of his Body was of some peculiar Texture, fitted to endure every external Elementary Pressure, without Injury, or Annoyance.

4. This Catastrophe must be attended with powerful Efforts upon the Mind ; it acting through the Organs of the Body, must be supposed in dreadful Disorder ! How unhappy the Change in this (just before) happy, regular and holy Being ! How disagreeable its Inclinations and Affections ! Some Moments since God was its Delight, and supreme Joy ! and now even a transient Thought of him gives Pain to this consciously guilty Soul ! and in a bewildred manner it vainly seeks a Covert for a Retreat ! But at the Voice of Deity how does he tremble, and with what Reluctancy does the Sinner answer the Call of his God ? telling him, his Voice made him hide, and that because he was naked.

N.B. An Holy God an unwelcome Guest to an unholy and false Creature! And thus as by one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin; so Death has passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned.

I will now endeavour a Discussion of the Nature and Progress of penal Evils: And reckon them to be in general of two Kinds; either

1. Such as seem to be governed by the established and settled Law of Nature and Things; described by the Wise Man, *Eccles. ix. 1, 2.* as common to all; and by their several Modes, and Forms, discover neither Love nor Hatred: Or,

2. Such as are the immediate and evident Remarks of a Supreme BEING in Cases very notorious; and where the Subject is incurable, are the Expressions of his angry Scourge, and Lashes of his Iron Rod.

In both Cases they are under the Limitation of Sovereign Pleasure: But in the former, by Means of a new Constitution of Things (in the Hands of a Great Recoverer) are often managed so as to terminate in the Creature's Advantage and Benefit; the Glory of the Divine Attributes at the same time, not only secured, but illustrated, by God's bringing Good out of those Evils; making penal Evils, (which are the Effects of moral Evil, or Sin) to enervate, and mortify their very Cause.

What I have a more particular View unto in this Essay, is, a Detection of those Sorts of penal Evils which are ranged under the Head, and known by the Name of bodily Distempers, or those painful Disorders which an human Body is at any time afflicted with. And these are originated from a Variety of secondary Causes.

The Constitution of an human Body a little regarded will furnish us with Plenty of Ideas on this Subject.

It seems to be analogous to the Elements of Earth, Water, Air, Fire, and is a Compound of each.

(1.) As to the Air, this Element in its various Alterations and Changes produceth different Effects upon such a Body, which strongly proves its Dependence upon this Air. As for Instance, its different Degrees of Density, and Rarefaction, Cold or Heat, produce a greater Chill, Torpidness and Inactivity : Or, on the other hand, a greater Vigor and Activity. Supposing it the best constituted Body, and the less sensible of these Alterations, yet as it imbibes and receives into its Lungs this airy Fluid ; so it mingles and incorporates with its Blood, and Humours, at every Systole or Pulsation of the Heart ; and that each sudden Alteration of its Pressure is not fatal, must remain a Subject of Wonder !

Again, the Earth, as it depends upon Air, Fire and Water, for its Fertility, &c. and without which its infinitely various, and numberless Inhabitants could not subsist ; since thus, it must needs strongly influence the human Body, which cannot be supported without its vegetative, and animal Productions. And these Productions must vary in their Nature and Kind, according to different Seasons and Soils : For with respect to the Earth's diurnal Ecliptic, and annual Motions, how different must the solar and planetary Influences be, upon all its Productions, as well as upon the human Body, by reason of their or its greater Distance from, or Proximity unto the grand Source of Heat and Life ?

So again, may I reckon the different Efforts made upon the human Body, from the watry Element, the Qualities of which must differ according to those of the Air, in which the burthened Clouds hang before their Distillation, whether in Showers, Dews, or by Filtration on the lofty Hills,
giving

giving Origin thereby to Springs, Brooks and Rivers. If we consider their different Strata's and Beds through which they are convey'd! This is that useful *Menstruum*, by which great Part of our Food is prepared, into which it must necessarily insinuate itself, and incorporate its essential Particles; and by this these Bodies are assisted in the most important Parts of animal Secretion.

2. These Disorders may arise from an undue Regimen, or a criminal Neglect of Self-government, as Excess in either Food, or Exercise, a Deficiency in either of these; or either of them unseasonably applied, may occasion a painful Alteration. There are besides, many unsuitable, (tho' to the Flesh, or sensually, pleasant) Gratifications, which may be attended with very ill Effects.

3. They may arise from Men, or Things: From the former, either through Frailty, or Vice; or merely accidental and undesigned. And there are many evil Occurrences we are exposed to every Moment. So that the Observation is just, *Surely Man walketh in a vain shew.*

4. Many of these Disorders may arise Hereditarily, and be the Legacy of a corrupt and depraved parental Constitution.

5. They may sometimes arise from the Instrumentality of the most disordered Spirit, the great Enemy of Mankind, as in the Case of *Job*, &c. How far his Influence reaches in many Cases we know not.

6. They may be such as cannot easily be accounted for from these or any other secondary Cause, and must be resolved wholly into the sovereign Pleasure of God. All are (I have observed) the genuine Effects of Sin; some may be the immediate Effects of some Sins, and judicial Remarks upon them; but in all, and each of these, I am sure God has reserved to himself the sole Prerogative of limiting their several Degrees and Periods.

Having

Having found out the Cause of all penal Evil, and some of the Avenues of it, as it affects the human Body; I shall next attempt a View of these Afflictions, as under the Direction of a kind and gracious God.

And as this kindest BEING cannot be benefited by any of his Creatures Miseries; so neither does he at any time make them the Objects of his Complacency and Delight; but rather chuseth to illustrate his Wisdom, Holiness and Goodness, by making them a Means of bringing about such gracious Ends, as are worthy his Notice, the Benefit and Advantage of all which must terminate on the Creature, though in great Condescension, he is pleased to esteem the Creature's Regularity and Holiness, his own Glory. *Psal. l. 23.* The Creature is benefited by these kind of Evils, *viz.* Bodily Distempers, &c.

1. When they tend to the Relief of the Mind.
2. When they make us discern the Desert of Sin, as the Cause of them.
3. When they refer us to the most proper Means of Relief under them.
4. When they make us love God more, under whose Government they are.
5. When they make us love this World less.
6. When they expedite and hasten our Preparations, and raise our Wishes more after a better World, and State of Existence.

Bodily Distempers must be esteemed Evils as they are in themselves dissonant to the primitive, original, pure Laws of Nature; as being attended with Pain and Anxiety; For the Apostle observes, That *no Affliction for the present* (or so far as we feel their painful Effects) *can seem joyous, but on the contrary grievous*, even to those who by their Means are proved to be the Children of the Divine Love and Care; but he adds, *nevertheless, they yield*

yield the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. As,

1. When the Mind becomes bettered and improved by them; when it's led to enquire into, and hate the Cause, from the Disagreeableness of its Effect. And methinks, a wide Field here opens upon me. If I take a Survey only of that Part of the World of Beings, with which I am conversant at present, every Relation I stand in to them, and they to me, is attended with Uncertainty! What Relation seems stronger, and more intimate than Body and Mind? and yet by these Afflictions I have the solemn Hint given me! — The Wise Man has exhausted the whole Subject, and fil'd his Experiments upon everlasting Record. And 'tis observable, under the various Attempts he has made, he never is able once to alter their Character and Definition; he does not say, this has something of Satisfaction in it; that less; and this more. No; but he sums up every Inquiry, with the strongest Epithet, *Vanity of Vanity!* or *Vanities of Vanities!* And lest any Ambiguity or Doubt should be couched in too general Terms, he adds, *All is Vanity; and there is no Profit under the Sun.* And what, was this the State of Things in their pristine and primitive Form? Such an Unsuitableness and Unfitness in the Relation of Things could not be the Product of infinite Wisdom, Power and Goodness, the grand Source of all Regularity and Order! for that Cause which is attended with such unkind, unbenign, Effects must be hateful.

Is there a Beauty in Order? and must there not be a Turpitude and Deformity in Disorder? Is there a Pleasure, a Joy, a Satisfaction in the Fitness of Things, when each Relation contributes to a fuller Furniture of mutual Satisfaction to its Subject? And must there not be an Uneasiness in Pain, and an Infelicity attend an Unfitness in Things? an intolerable Harshness, and the most ungrateful Relish

Relish in every Relation, each Being and Thing bears to each other? And when this is discerned not only speculatively, and by Inquiry; but confirmed by immediate sensible Pressure, must not this raise a Dislike; yea, an Abhorrence of its Cause? When thus I am led to the hateful Source, and to a thorough Detection of all the favourable Opinions I had formerly imbibed; and when by these I am prevailed upon to observe with Care, and Constancy, the eternal and original Law of Nature; and to conduct myself according to those Laws, by a Care that each Relation I stand in be filled up with all good Offices, unwilling in any Sense, to be the Author of Pain, Anxiety, or Distress to any of those Beings my Influence reacheth; and that are within the Relation, being prompt and ready to make the Will of my Sovereign LORD, the Rule of my Conduct toward himself, and the Standard by which I censure and judge all my own Actions: When bodily Distempers have this Tendency (through the Grace of GOD) they then cease to be unfriendly, or unwelcome.

2. They are useful when they help us to discern the Desert of Sin, the true Cause of them. Our most just Apprehensions of the Desert of Sin, is perhaps most eminently and clearly ascertained to ourselves and others, by a meek, humble, patient, and resigned Temper, and Deportment under afflictive Exercises. By this Means, we justify the present Dispensation towards us, and humbly confess our Guilt: Did we think ourselves innocent we should find it difficult to arrive at, and exercise such a Temper, and Carriage; but by this Means, we lay our Hands upon our Mouths, (in prophetic Language) and are dumb before GOD. We not only own we are not wronged, but we adore the Hand that punisheth us, because it does so only in measure; not directed by our Merit, but his Mercy. By this we acknowledge Sin the worst of

Evils, and hope for the future to bear any Inconvenience to our Bodies, rather than comply with that which will certainly be attended with greater to both Body and Soul : We are hereby enabled to discern that Sin) which is no other than a Contempt of God's Authority) is an Evil that deserveth to be attended with everlasting Disorder and Misery, both of Body and Mind : And that it necessarily would, if Divine Mercy interpose not in our Favour.

3. Bodily Disorders are beneficial Afflictions, when they are a Means of leading us to the most proper methods for Relief, under all the Disadvantage of a fallen State.

I shall reduce these Means to Three Heads.

(1.) GOD'S WORD.

(2.) HIS CHRIST.

(3.) HIS SPIRIT.

1. When they engage us to a more frequent and serious Recourse to the written Revelation of the Divine Will. In this we shall find each Circumstance of our Case explained, and such Prescriptions plainly laid down, as are sovereignly and infallibly useful. When the Human Nature became depraved (through the Fall) God saw it necessary in order to accomplish his generous Design of restoring a lapsed World to his Favour, to make an express Revelation of his Will ; which Revelation must be adapted to the Capacities of an human Soul, so as that by a due and intent Application to it, it might prove the most proper Antidote to that Moral Depravity with which it was infected, and that by Virtue thereof, a kind of spiritual Life and Vigor might be conveyed : And thus in some good Measure answer for the Disadvantages that attend the Necessity of a Deprivation of the Tree of Life. The Revelation of that divine Will, must be given at sundry Times, and divers Manners, according to the different Ages
of

of the World, and the diverse Circumstances of the Creature; but that which was designed for more mature and perpetual Use, must be by a scriptural Volume thereof.

This by the most attentive Part of Mankind has (in all its Periods) been found a glorious Means of Relief, in each Extremity, and under every Affliction, it being well calculated to promote those most noble, and kind Ends of its Author! It is a System of the most sublime, and yet plain and rational Principles, enforced by the most proper Motives, Arguments and Examples, and by an historical Narration interspersed, the Practice of Virtue or Holiness is recommended in the strongest Light; and its contrary as much discountenanced. In this we have the great Volume of Nature unfolded! and the brightest Mirror of the God of Nature! his Perfections explained and illustrated; together with the Methods of his Government in his Care of the World! the Doctrines of Providence in beautiful Portraiture, describing a kind and regular Management of the whole Universe! In which Revelation we also have the original Design, Undertaking, Progress, and Accomplishment of Divine and Free-Grace; in order to relieve, and restore a Race of helpless, guilty, and miserable Beings!

And what Method could Divine Wisdom have projected more to our Advantage? in which we may in some Instance or other see the Nature of our own Case stated, its Circumstances described, and the Methods which have been took for Relief with Success! In which there is added also for our Caution, many Instances of such Methods taken by our Fellow-Creatures, that have been inconsistent, unsafe, and fatal; by which we are the more amply furnished with the most necessary and useful Instructions! Without such a Recourse our Afflictions would be insupportable; but when by

Means of these we are taught to *remember the Name* (or Power of the LORD) *in the Night* *, (or under these Gloomings) *and keep his Law*; then his *Statutes are our Songs in the House of our Pilgrimage* †. And by this we find Comfort in Afflictions, because his *Word quickens us* *. So important a Means is this, that David says †, *he had perished in his Affliction, unless God's Law had been his Delight* **. And it becomes thus useful by enervating and mortifying its Cause.

2. Another proper Means of Relief is GOD'S CHRIST, to whom if Afflictions lead us, they become the greatest Blessings. *He was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Griefs*. There is a certain Ease obtained under Afflictions, when we meet with one that has suffered in like manner with ourselves; to know the Means they used, and understand the Success. This affords a Revival to us, inasmuch as that it proves our Case is not, or may not be, desperate: But to be acquainted with one whose Case has been far more afflictive, being attended with all possible Aggravations, and yet securely and safely surmounted all, (thro' the divine Favour) affords farther Satisfaction; but to find such a Person perfectly Holy, and so voluntarily submitting to all this, and that too in order to make his Claim more perfect and undeniable to the Office of a Physician, Saviour and Lord to all the Afflicted, who will apply to him †; this affords unspeakable Consolation!

But as Afflictions have a natural Tendency to put us upon Inquiry, and if they have been a Means of prompting us to a greater Application to the Word of GOD: The whole Design of the Revelation must be mistook, and neglected, if it direct us not to this CHRIST, the Anointed Saviour. And methinks a small Acquaintance with his Character,

* Psal. cxix. 55.

† Ver. 54.

* Ver. 50.

† Ver. 92.

** Matth. iv. compared with Heb. ii. 18.

rafter, would remove all Scruple and Jealousy of his Insufficiency: For from the Revelation, it appears he was God's immediate Agent, *by whom he made the Worlds* *; by this *his Word (or Logos)* was every thing made, *that was made* †: And if so, He who first constituted those Bodies, must certainly be the best acquainted with their Contexture and Frame; and is the properest Person to apply to, in order to rectify their Disorders. His Power is unquestionably proved in his Character, and his Willingness by his Office and Practice, when He undertook the Affair of Man's Redemption and appeared in the Flesh.

But farther, If we look into the Nature and Tendency of bodily Disorders more minutely, we shall find that they evidently point to a Dissolution of their Frame, and a Resolution into their original Dust: Now this Jesus is exhibited to us in the Character of the Judge of Quick and Dead; who by the Exertion of his great Power in raising dead Bodies, will give publick Attestation to his high Commission, and divine Authority, in Presence of Angels and Men! How well then does it become us under these Afflictions, which may terminate in Death, that we secure an Interest in this Lord of Life and Death; that so these Bodies, when they drop, may not die for ever, but may sleep in Jesus. Is the Power of Jesus thus extensive? none can so certainly correct all our present Disorders, and bring them under due Restraint. It is He, the Glorious He! can make them answer the most valuable Ends and Purposes! What cannot we expect from him who has undertook to mortify and subdue the Force of moral Evil, and to render beneficial all its penal Effects? What may we not expect from him, *who has loved us to the Death*, and beyond it? Surely his Experience reacheth beyond the Bounds of all possible Necessity †! Let

* Heb. i. 2. † John i. 3. ‡ Heb. vii. 25.

Let us make Him our Friend, and every afflictive Page of Life we turn over, will be so far from separating, that they will the more cement us in the Love of God, through this Jesus our Lord.

3. They become the most proper Means of Relief, when they inspire us with sincere and earnest Sollicitations, for the gracious Influences of the Blessed SPIRIT. The other Means will want of their Efficacy, without the Applications, and attendant Inforcements of this divine and holy Power; without his common, but gracious Influences, the Means of our brutal and sensitive Life are insufficient *; and by a suspension of these his kind Influences we perish!

When these Machines are most in order, there is absolute Need of his Visitation to preserve our Spirits from being fluttered (or troubled) much more when under afflictive Pressures! These are in his Hands (as a Sanctifier,) a proper Means of consecrating these Vehicles, and making them the Temples of Deity †. For those very Dispositions of Mind, as are most proper to support us under these Evils, are called *the Fruits of the Spirit*, and *the Graces of the Spirit*; by which he is said to have wrought in us all the good Pleasure of Divine Goodness, and the Work of Faith with Power, which shall terminate in our Advantage; since he will produce these, as Evidences of our Sonship; proving thereby we are not illegitimate, but the genuine Children of the LORD Almighty, Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8. compared with 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17, 18.

4. They are great Blessings, when they promote our Love to God, under whose Government they are. We usually esteem him our most sincere

* Psal. civ. 29, 30, compared with Tobit x. 12. † 1 Cor. iiii. 16, 17. comp. with Chap. vi. 13, 19.

cere Friend, who is unwilling to drop his Thought-
 fulness about our best Interests, or Care to pro-
 mote them; though we through our Per-
 verseness have frustrated all his prior kind Desires
 towards us. And surely, our Heavenly Father is
 our most earnest, and most disinterested Friend,
 who neglects no Methods of Education now,
 which may be of most important Use and Service
 to us hereafter: Though some of these Methods
 are unpleasant and grievous to us, but were made
 useful *, through our Perverseness under other
 Treatment. If we see the Beauties of such a sin-
 cere Love; and if we act like genuine Children,
 it will excite in us the most intense Flame of Af-
 fection! Gratitude will rise beyond its wonted Li-
 mits! and exceed its stated Bounds! But of Divine
 Friendship, we may soon be convinced, no Figure
 can too strongly represent its Excellency! Infinite
 in Counsel, Power, and Faithfulness are Attri-
 butes essential to his very Being! so that the sa-
 cred Volume beautifully informs us, that this Kind
 BEING *afflicts not willingly,* (or because his Will
 made the Necessity,) *neither grieves the Children of*
Men: But that 'tis to refine and purify our Na-
 tures; to restore the exact Lines of his Image in
 us; and to perfect our Resemblance of him! He
 might stop his Hand, and suspend, yea, totally
 withdraw his gracious Influences, when other Me-
 thods prove ineffectual to reform and humble us.
 He might return such an Answer to the Requests
 our Miseries offer, as he did to the rich Man in
 Hell (pleading in Behalf of his Brethren, that ex-
 traordinary Methods might be vouchsafed to re-
 claim them,) *You have Moses and the Prophets;*
(yea, the Doctrines of CHRIST and his Apostles;)
if these will not do, nothing shall: If you will be
unholy, be unholy still! But on the contrary,
 his

-his Language to us under Afflictions is, *How shall I give thee up? I will return upon thee in Judgment, (or I will afflict thee) till thou seeft thy Guilt, and seek my Favour; In thy Affliction thou wilt seek me early,* Hof. xi. 8. *comp. with v. 15.*

Again, shall not these Disorders in our bodily Constitution, which forebode our Mortality, engage us to choose GOD as our Portion, and unchanging Good! Their Language is, *E'er long we shall become unfit Vehicles for the Inhabitation of our Spirits! And would we have our Souls naked, and exposed, and unprovided for, in such an Extremity? Should not these Afflictions engage us with increasing Earnestness to get interested in that Favour, which shall appear as the Shechinah to our Souls, in the Possession of which, they will appear clothed to Advantage? 2 Cor. v. if not, how melancholy an Idea does it convey, to find ourselves just under Obligation (by Virtue of a Writ of Ejectment) to take a Remove from all present Enjoyments, unthought of, unprepared for, and under the most manifest Hazard of the most dismal Event? This would be inconceivably dreadful! But to be so well provided for, as to be interested in the Favour of the most Happy MIND, will administer real Life, undying Vigor, and Health! Thus these Disorders ought to engage and increase our Affections towards the Blessed GOD, as they furnish us (thus improved) with good Hopes, yea, a well-grounded Certainty, that we shall not more really be absent from the Body, than we shall be present (happily present) with the LORD.*

5. They are Benefits, if they procure a Wane in our Affections towards this World, and abate our Fondnesses towards its dearest Enjoyments. We might expect this to be a genuine Fruit of this kind of Afflictions, in that they render us less capable of enjoying even the innocent Sweetness of Life; by

and I love them

them we lose the Relishes of Sense; and those very Enjoyments, which once elated our Souls to the highest Pitch of the sensitive Life, are by their Means become insipid, and tasteless! And as we are designed, and obliged by the last Dispensation of Things, for a Life of Faith, and holy Communion at present, in order to the preparing and disposing our Spirits for a separate Life, or the Life of an unimbodied Spirit, in the coming State; methinks these must be an Advantage to us, as they enlarge our Freedom, for a sublime, godlike, and spiritual Life and Converse at present; and at Death how must an Improvement of them facilitate our Passage from World to World? Having before proved that we are not only capable of, but trained up, and disposed for a Life independent on Lease and Matter. They are useful,

6. If they expedite our Preparations, and raise our Wishes more after a better World, and State of Existence. Whilst we enjoy a firm and unshaken bodily Constitution, we are too apt to forget ourselves, and to put an undue Estimate on the Pleasures, the Gaities, and the Amusements of this World; and frequently find we are forcibly struck with its Caresses, or its Charms! The vulgar Idea we take in greedily; and thereby inadvertently lose our Souls; we enervate all their Powers and Affections, by idolizing, and at last deifying the sordid Object! nay, and suppose we become so happy as to see our Mistake in time, we find it almost an insuperable Difficulty to remove, and overcome every Prepossession and Prejudice! But as this kind of Affliction blunts the Edge of every Temptation from this Quarter; so it helps us to make just Remarks, and to pass an impartial Judgment, whilst we thus view Heaven and Earth in Contrast! We by their Means are often convinced, that 'tis most fit, proper, and safe for us

to examine into the real Nature, and Difference of Things, with their several Relations; and thereby are led to discern it is dangerous taking Things as at first Sight they appear, or according to the received Opinion of Men, or Judgment of Sense: We then are persuaded to proportion our Value for Things according to their Worth; and reckon a State of never-ending, and never-changing Existence, far preferable in our Esteem, and Choice, to one uncertain and changing! We then are persuaded to think it not worth our while to gratify those Senses, and Appetites, to the Stretch, or to Excess, or any way unfitly; which are liable in themselves to the Loss of their very Faculties, Capacities and Powers, even in the Gratification! And especially when we add, the Hazard we manifestly run at the same time of the unappeasable Displeasure of our SOVEREIGN; whose everlasting, and unalterable Law, and Decree, forbids an Entrance into his Rest, to all the Unholy and Impure *! We shall, by these Means, soon see a darksome Gloom and an heavy Shade cast on all present Beauties, and a total Eclipse on all their Glory! so that we shall long, and wish that these penal Evils may hasten their last Attack; being well assured that the Being, Vigour, and Life of a Soul, is not necessarily connected with its Stay in the Body: For was it so, it must grow languid and faint in proportion to the Disorders, Pains, and Pressures of the Body; whereas on the contrary, we have often experienced that its Vigour and Life has received a renewal at the very same time our Bodies have been under evident Decays!

How welcome then must a mature Removal be to that World where the Cause of all Misery, and all, and each of its evil Consequences will for ever cease? and to which happy Clime these sickly
Bodies

Bodies shall in proper Time be raised, and conjointly with these Souls will have Admittance ! where immortal Health, and Youth, and Vigour shall sit on every Face ! and an universal Smile, the Symbol of true Joy, shall make the Sight ravishing to Eternity !

Upon the whole, How agreeable are the various Scenes Afflictions open upon the Favourites of Heaven ? And with what Pleasure may such a Child of Affliction contemplate the very Exit of Penal Evil ? It has been observed, that the first Transgression was the Means of receiving the Poison ; and that it was of such a Nature as to threaten inevitably the Ruin and Dissolution of the bodily Constitution. But is it not a Display of Divine Wisdom and Mercy, in that the very last (and to Nature dire) Effort of penal Evil should present to our View nothing but what is highly agreeable ? inasmuch, that when we describe the Exit, it affords those Shades of Light, which strike the Eye, and raise the Mind to Extasy ! What ! Death the Portal of Life ! only a Passage from Earth to Heaven ! The Body, 'tis true, will be resolved into Dust ; and its Particles disunited, and separated, but its Stamen will be safely deposited ; and continue incapable of being annihilated by any accidental Force. The Body will putrify, and corrupt ; as the Seed that must die ; but 'tis in order to its Refinement, by which its unnecessary and corruptible Particles will be purged off ; and at the Voice of its LORD, will arise a Body constituted of such Particles which are not subject to Corruption. For the Apostle's Observation is admirably adapted to the present Subject, when he says, *The Husbandman soweth not that Body which shall be ; but bear Grain, as of Wheat, &c. But GOD giveth it a Body, as it hath pleased him ; and to every Seed its own Body : To every kind of Seed, a distinct kind*

of

of Body : So that Metaphor is beautiful: *They that sow to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption ; but they who sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit, reap Life everlasting.*

How agreeable an Idea does this convey, even under the Agonies of Death? “ I must ’tis true
 “ drop this Body into the grand Repositum, (or
 “ Receptacle) of human Bodies. A Change it
 “ must suffer, and Sin has made it necessary that
 “ the Separation of Soul and Body should be at-
 “ tended with some Reluctancy to Nature ; but
 “ let me think freely, and through divine Mercy,
 “ I shall overcome this Reluctancy : Death is no-
 “ thing ! his Poison was sheathed in the Body of
 “ the Lamb, who died, but now lives and reigns !
 “ who is worthy to open the Seals of the Book ;
 “ and has proved it is no absurd Article of my
 “ Faith and Trust, viz. That I should expect
 “ the Resurrection of this Body in Vigour, and
 “ with Capacities fitted to endure a happy Uni-
 “ on with my Soul a Succession of Ages, no
 “ less than eternal ! ”

Thus may we triumph in Death, knowing we shall obtain Victory through the Lamb.

Now to Him who sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb of God ; be ascribed Blessing, and Honour, and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

F I N I S.